

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 PA-03 PRS-01 USIA-15 CIAE-00 INR-10

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SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER SPEAKS ON CRIME IN JAMAICA

1. IN RESPONSE TO GROWING CONCERN OVER INCREASED CRIME, PRIME MINISTER MANLEY ON EVENING OF AUG 26, 1973 ADDRESSED THE NATION ON RADIO AND TELEVISION. HE SET FORTH A NEW ANTI-CRIME PROGRAM, CONSISTING OF BOTH LEGAL AND SECURITY MEASURES, AND A CONTINUING CABINET SUB-COMMITTEE TO SUPERVISE THE PROGRAM. MR. MANLEY TIED THE GANJA (MARIJUANA) TRADE AND THE INCREASE IN LOCAL CRIME TO THE INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC IN FIREARMS AND HARD DRUGS.

2. THE LEGAL PACKAGE CONSISTS OF LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS COVERING GUN CONTROL, CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS, AND THE DRUG TRADE. THE SUGGESTED LEGISLATION WOULD RAISE THE MAXIMUM SENTENCE FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF FIREARMS FROM THREE TO TEN YEARS, AND MAKE IT A CRIMINAL OFFENSE FOR THE HOLDER OF A LICENSED FIREARM TO LOSE IT THROUGH NEGLIGENCE. SPECIAL COURTS, DUBBED "GUN COURTS" BY MR. MANLEY, WOULD BE ESTABLISHED TO DEAL EXPEDITIOUSLY WITH PERSONS CHARGED WITH CRIMES OF VIOLENCE INVOLVING FIREARMS, THUS AVOIDING THE PRESENT DELAYS. DETENTION FACILITIES WOULD BE EXPANDED. FINALLY, TRAFFICKING IN HARD DRUGS, WHICH PRESENTLY CARRIES A FINE OF \$200.00 OR A TWO YEAR SENTENCE, WOULD BE PUNISHABLE BY LIFE IMPRISONMENT.

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3. THE SECURITY PACKAGE, ALREADY PARTLY IN EFFECT, WILL CONSIST

OF FREQUENT ROAD BLOCKS TO REDUCE CRIMINALS' MOBILITY, CHECK DOCUMENTS, AND SEARCH FOR ILLEGAL FIREARMS; STRICTER SURVEILLANCE OF AIRSTRIPS; INTENSIFIED JOINT POLICE/MILITARY PATROLS; AND RENEWED INSTRUCTIONS TO POLICE TO OPPOSE BAIL IN CASES INVOLVING VIOLENT CRIME.

4. EACH OF THE MORNING PAPERS HAILED MR. MANLEY'S PROGRAM IN PAGE ONE EDITORIALS AS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, BUT NOTED THAT THE ACID TEST WOULD LIE IN THE GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO HAVE THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION ENACTED. BOTH CALLED FOR THE POLICE TO ACT WITH CONSIDERATION AND RESTRAINT AND FOR THE POPULACE TO SUPPORT THE POLICE ACTIVELY. AT THE OTHER END OF THE SPECTRUM, SOME HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE PRIVATELY INDICATED THAT THEY DO NOT FEEL THE PRIME MINISTER'S PROGRAM IS ADEQUATE AND HAVE SUGGESTED THAT MORE THOUGHT BE GIVEN TO DECLARING A STATE OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY.

5. INCREASED EMPHASIS BY GOJ ON FIGHTING CRIME MAY GENERATE REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL TRAINING OR EQUIPMENT FROM THE US. INDEED, WE HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED ONE REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON A POSSIBLE GOJ PURCHASE OF NISSEN HUTS TO HOUSE ADDITIONAL POLICE RECRUITS. STIFFER LEGISLATION AND SECURITY MEASURES ARE ALSO LIKELY TO INCREASE OUR PROBLEMS IN THE AREA OF PROTECTION OF US CITIZENS IF MORE AMERICANS ARE APPREHENDED WITH GUNS, AMMUNITION, OR DRUGS IN THEIR POSSESSION.

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